

BMHA Newsletter

BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA



Volume 13, Number 2

Apr/May/June 2002

BMHA forum at Hamvention 2002 !

The First Decade of BMHA, Look Back but Looking Forward !

It's actually more than 10 years since the first BMHA Hamvention forum and this is the 11th year of the BMHA Hamvention bike ride. This year we are taking a look at the first decade of the BMHA bike ride with Jim Gumbert, NC8Y, the organizer of each and every ride. Jim will have some interesting stories and some of the highlights of this very popular and picturesque ride sponsored by BMHA. Russ Dwarshuis, KB8U, a veteran forum speaker, will show and talk about some of his unique projects he has worked on during the last decade and some very interesting things he has done. Russ is one of the pioneers of BMHA and has supported, advertised and assisted with many BMHA activities. Russ is also a long time BMHA Board Member.

We plan to have copies of the 1st BMHA Newsletter, Volume 1, Number 1 at the forum. A complimentary copy of this ancient Newsletter will be given to all who attend. We will also have many other BMHA newsletters available for a small donation if you would like a copy.

We have some new ideas to present this year. Please attend and bring your ideas and suggestions with you.

Bring your special project to talk about, demonstrate or promote. We will try to give you time before or during the forum to show to the group.

Once again, we have been allotted one hour of official forum time. Since we are the first forum of the day, we will have an informal session prior to our official time. Come join us in Room 2 at 8:00 a.m. for the informal time.

Here are the details:

Date: Sunday, May 19, 2002

Time: Informal, 8:00 am – 8:30 am

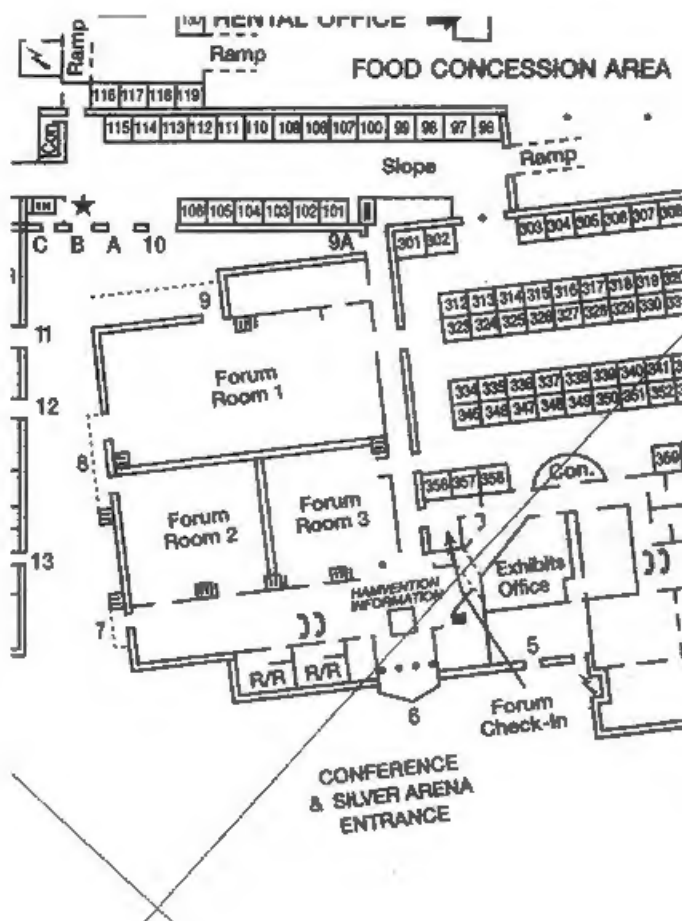
Forum: 8:30 am – 9:30 am

Location: Room 2

(This is the same location as 2001 – See map at right)

After the forum, we can continue our "Visiting" at the Food Concession area which is close to our forum room (see map at right).

See the BMHA Website <http://www.LaFetra.com/BMHA/> for any last minute details



Bicycle Mobile Hams of America's Eleventh Annual Hamvention Ride

Tipp City Park, Tipp City, Ohio
Ride Begins 3:30 PM Saturday, May 18, 2002

Come and meet your fellow BMHA members and check out their bicycle-mounted transceivers. Set up a special-event station. You can bring your bike and come on the ride, or relax in the park and perhaps have a QSO with those of us on the ride. Also, in response to requests from BMHAers who may have logistical problems getting their bikes to the Dayton area...

RENTAL BIKES WILL BE AVAILABLE !!

Our friends at Tipp Cyclery (whom you may remember as the donor of the "I Traveled the Farthest to the BMHA Ride" T-shirt) have informed us that a limited number of rental bikes will be available. Check out their web site at www.tippcyclery.com, or send me an email and I'll put you in touch with them.

General Information

Once again the ride will start from the Municipal Park in Tipp City, Ohio. Tipp City is on Interstate 75, about 10 miles northeast of the Hamvention site at Hara Arena.

The ride will leave at 3:30 PM EDT. If you'd like to come up early for a snack or some socializing, we'll be there by about 2:00 PM. We'll be in the North parking lot (same as last year). Don't worry about finding us, it's not as if you could hide a bunch of biker-hams in a park that size. The ride itself is normally an easy 27 miles with stops thrown in occasionally to keep everyone together, and slow enough for some meaningful conversation (or DXing).

For the latest details, the map, and some interesting pictures of past rides, see my website at: <http://my.ohio.voyager.net/~otown/bmha.html>

Send me an email if you have any ideas, or just to let me know your coming. (It's always nice to know how many people to plan for.) But there's no registration or anything formal like that. Just show up!

See you there,

Jim Gumbert, NC8Y
otown@infonet.com



BMHA NEWSLETTER

Editor: Scott Farrell, KE4WMF

President:

Bil Paul, KD6JUI

Vice President:

Skip La Fetra, AA6WK

Secretary/Treasurer

Mike Nickolaus, NF0N

Webmaster/Webhost

Skip La Fetra, AA6WK

Directors:

Russell Dwarshuis, KB8U John Einberger, N0MSA

Founder: Hartley Alley, NA0A (*Silent Key - May 2001*)

BMHA NEWSLETTER is a quarterly publication of the Bicycle Mobile Hams of America - Jan, Apr, July, and Oct. Permission is given to reproduce any of the material in this issue, provided the author is credited and the source is acknowledged as "from the Newsletter of the Bicycle Mobile Hams of America." Please send a clip to the address below. We welcome articles, suggestions, letters, announcements, photos, artwork - anything pertaining to the combining of bicycling with amateur radio.

The BMHA is affiliated with Adventure Cycling Association, the League of American Bicyclists, and *Worldradio*.

BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA (BMHA)

c/o Mike Nickolaus, NF0N

316 E. 32nd St.

South Sioux City, NE 68776-3512

E-mail: BMHA-Webmaster@LaFetra.com

Website: <http://www.LaFetra.com/BMHA/>

ABOUT BMHA

For the information of our first-time readers

Bicycle Mobile Hams of America got its start when a 'Stray' in the June '89 QST magazine asked to "get in touch with hams who operate their radios while bicycle-mobile," signed by Hartley Alley, NA0A. Twenty-five hams responded, filled out questionnaires, and received a summary of the collected data.

In April of '90 we had our first BMHA Forum at the Dayton Hamvention. We played to a packed house, overflowed the room, and added 54 names to our mailing list. Our eight subsequent forums have drawn increasingly larger audiences, and now BMHA is firmly established as a 'regular' at this world-renowned event.

This is the forty-fourth issue of our quarterly newsletter, which has become the clearinghouse for the exchange of info and ideas for the hams who go on the air from their bicycles.

BMHA membership puts you in touch with a friendly and helpful group of bike-riding hams. You'll make contacts through our membership directory, E-mail address list, E-mail discussion group, the annual meeting and Forum at the Dayton Hamvention and other regional meetings, and of course through the BMHA Newsletter, which has articles on bike trips, antennas, other gear, operating tips, etc. A membership application is on the next-to-last page.

BMHA NEWS

Announcing the First BMHA Midwest/Dakota Rally

Date: June 15, 2002

Place: 3900 Club Midwest/Dakota Convention
South Sioux City, NE

Time: All Day

All Bicycle Mobile Hams of America members and anyone with an interest in Hamming and Bicycling are invited to attend. See the ARRL Midwest/Dakota Convention, attend forums, roam through the big flea market, share with QRP'ers, and go on the "Ride to the Park".

Attendance to the Midwest/Dakota Convention is recommended to join in the activities.

BMHA will have a forum to promote BMHA and show our beginnings and the activities we participate in. BMHA and QRP have a natural relationship and we will share in the activities with the Iowa QRP Association.

We encourage anyone interested in this event to bring their special project, bicycle with complete setup or handouts to share with others who have the same BMHA interest.

To pre-register for the ARRL Midwest/Dakota Convention and to see the many activities, see the following web site: <http://www.3900club.com/>

To learn more about BMHA and for developing Rally activities, see the BMHA web site: <http://www.lafetra.com/bmha/>

BMHA Invited by HFpack to join their "On the Air" Schedule

BMHA members have been invited by a very active group, HFpack, to join them in their "On the Air" schedule. There is a natural association between our groups and this invitation to share has the potential to expand both groups activities. I hope to participate myself and encourage all BMHA'ers to do the same.

Below is the text of the invitation from Bonnie, KQ6XA, one of HFpack's most active contributors:

HFpack, the HF Portable Group, has on-the-air activity which is perfect for HF bicycle mobile and invites BMHA to utilize the HFpack calling frequencies. HFpack always gives priority to pedestrian, bicycle, portable, and QRP operators. Bases and mobiles of any power level are also welcome to join the fun. The primary calling frequency 18157.5kHz is active at all times of the day, 7 days /week. There is more daily activity presently for the 22:30Z group in North America. The Saturday schedule is global and usually has about 40 or more operators on the air worldwide at any given time. Sunday is also a big day for the HFpack. There are usually some base stations on the weekend who help keep the frequency clear for the lower powered stations.

HFpack Schedule

Daily

22:30Z = 18157.5kHz USB (CW= +700Hz)

Saturday

16:30Z = 18157.5kHz USB (CW= +700Hz)

17:00Z = 14342.5kHz USB (CW= +700Hz)

22:30Z = 18157.5kHz USB (CW= +700Hz)

23:00Z = 14342.5kHz USB (CW= +700Hz)

There are HFpack calling frequencies on every ham band. If 18157.5 is busy, we QSY +/-5kHz to 18152.5 or 18162.5. For more information about HFpack and the HFpack frequencies:

<http://www.hfpack.com> and

http://www.qsl.net/hfpack/images/hfpack_logoclock.gif

Bonnie KQ6XA

Back Issues Still Available.

You may purchase any of the 43 back issues of the BMHA Newsletter for \$1.50 each, postpaid. For info on the contents of the various issues send a business-size SASE to: BMHA, 316 East 32nd Street, South Sioux City, NE 68776-3512, and ask for the Index of Back Issues. This service available to members only.

Questions and Answers From YahooGroups...

What are the various options for mounting an HT on your bike? I need something that will allow me to move the HT easily, as I often use it when doing Skywarn activities, and I do only road and Greenway riding, so off road riding isn't a consideration.

Any help is appreciated! Again, thanks for the help!

Rick N9GSU

Responses...

I simply hose-clamped a piece of belt across my stem with a hose clamp on either side of my handlebars, and use a toe-clip strap to snug the radio down tight to the stem itself.

Gene Floyd

I mount the HT on my belt, not the bike. Too much vibration. Eventually something will break. I know other folks *have* mounted HT's on the handlebars without any problems; but I won't do that.

Richard Amirault N1JDU

I use the mounting pieces from a bicycle headlight. I made a little pedestal out of plastic and glued it to the piece that was formerly attached to the headlight. The other piece, as before, is mounted to the handlebars. The HT is secured to the pedestal with Velcro straps. The whole assembly quickly slides into the mount, just like it did when it was a headlight. I'm a very rugged rider. My full-blown ham station has been through large rock gardens and even seen a few good crashes. Nothing has broken. I love it!

Scott Farrell, KE4WMF

More Hamvention Ride Info For the Internet-Challenged... ☺

TO GET TO THE TIPP CITY PARK FROM HARA ARENA:

TALK-IN
145.23 (-600)
W8FW repeater



Hara Arena Area



Under normal Hamvention conditions, it takes about 25 minutes for the drive.

First, go east to I-75. If you're in front of Hara, you'll notice that Wolf Rd. dead ends into Shiloh Springs Rd. (the main road that Hara is on) at the traffic light right in front. Take Wolf Rd. south about a quarter-mile to the first intersection. This is Turner Rd. Turn left (you can only turn left), and stay on this road until you get to I-75 (about three miles).

NOTE: Turner Rd. changes into Shoup Mill Rd. when you cross Main St. It then becomes Needmore Rd. when you cross the Stillwater River. HOWEVER, all of these roads together are known as (and usually marked) Wright Bros. Pkwy.

When you get to I-75 and Needmore go NORTH (left, across the bridge).

Look for the Tipp City exit (EXIT 68) in about 10 miles. Turn right (east) at the top of the ramp. This is Main St. in Tipp City.

Take Main St. into "downtown" (about a mile). You will cross a railroad track (Tipp Cyclery is on the right as you cross if you need anything for your bike).

Turn left (north) at the second traffic light past the railroad. This is THIRD ST.

Look for the park on the right after four or five blocks. You'll see a civil-war era cannon on the left, in front of the American Legion. The north parking lot entrance is about a block further north. We'll be around the parking lot someplace.

Talk-In is on 145.23 (-) W8FW repeater.

EDITOR'S NOTEPAD

Headed for Sea Again...

What a busy inport this has been! Aside from normal maintenance and getting the last Newsletter out, I was sent to the Navy's coveted "Miniature Electronics Repair School," also known as "2m." Some think it's a basic solder course. That is far from the truth. Soldering is the only basic thing about the course. A simple way to illustrate the course is like learning to do "bodywork" on circuit boards. I'm now trained to replace DIPs, flatpaks, and other common components. Further, I can repair and/or fabricate replacements for damage conductors and repair cracked and/or otherwise damage circuit cards. All repairs are done to MILSPEC standards. Overall the course was a very good experience.

I spent 30-days in that course. Now I'm home for less than two weeks before heading out to the Bering Sea for an eight-week Alaska Patrol (ALPAT). The ship has been going through flight deck certifications, which has been keeping us very busy. I'm training to be one of the ship's Landing Signals Officers. So working last night in close proximity to a flying helicopter was a little exciting. It's crazy to imagine that we'll be doing these operations soon with night vision goggles and no lights in the near future.

This short time at home, and the fact that I'll still be at sea for the Hamvention, means that this Newsletter is being put together at blazing speeds. I hope to have everything completed and mailed before I leave. If you get this in April then you'll know I was successful.

All of my traveling hasn't left me with much time for cycling. But I ride when I can. Something that will be a little different this summer is I should have one or more new riding partners. I contacted the U.S. Association of Blind Athletes and have made arrangements to sponsor a blind athlete to ride on the back seat of my tandem bicycle. I've been in contact with a Paralympian that will probably run me into the ground. ☺ I haven't competed in a long time. So she will probably give me much needed exercise... or an early heart attack! ☹ I'll be sure to let you know how it turns out.

73,

Scott A. Farrell, KE4WMF
BMHA Newsletter Editor
BMHA Discussion List Moderator
<http://www.StealthTDI.com/HamRadio.html>

WEBMASTER'S CORNER

"Reflections on Elections"

As I write this column, it feels the same as Florida must have felt during the last Presidential election. I work for Hewlett-Packard (in the personal computer organization, no less), and by the time you read this, you will know how the close proxy vote about acquiring Compaq Computer went. But now (as I write this column), the vote is still a few days away and the tension in the air is thick enough to cut with a knife.

Our experiment with an on-line member survey was a success. We have had 26 responses (64% of which were BMHA members) and have learned a little about your riding habits and the type of microphone you use.

13% of you don't operate while riding, 29% use the handheld radio itself, and 46% use a speaker-mike. The more sophisticated rigs include a head-mounted "boom mike" (38%), an in-the-ear mike (17%, my personal choice), and 8% use a throat microphone.

9% of respondents "always" use their radio when they ride. 17% do so "usually", and 30% do so "often". 43% are "seldom", and nobody said that they use their radio "never" when riding.

You are a diverse group in riding habits. Half (54%) rode "no miles" in a typical week either "usually" or "often". But 12% rode 101 or more miles with the same frequency. Almost half (46%) fell into the 21-60 mile per week category.

These percentages don't add up to 100% because some left questions unanswered, and other questions allowed multiple answers (using a speaker-mike "usually" and a boom mike "often", for example).

You can see the "raw" results at the same location - <http://www.LaFetra.com/BMHA/Survey>

Our next survey:

Thank you for your suggestions about what to include in our next survey. We will be making it available in early April, and it will be found at the same URL. We will keep our first survey available as well.

We will be asking more about you - age distribution, other ham activities, and bands worked. We'll also ask about your equipment - type of bicycle, type of rig, and how you handle antenna and power needs.

Finally, we will find out how you feel about THE question many have asked - we've had a number of requests to handle dues payments online (using PayPal or a similar service). We will use the April survey to find out just how many of you would actually use such a method if it becomes available.

73-

Skip AA6WK
BMHA-Webmaster@LaFetra.com

YahooGroups! Discussion List News From KE4WMF

BMHA's Discussion List is currently up to 157 members. I had a server problem that kept me from being able to monitor traffic while I was in San Diego. However, a recent review of the list shows that it's been quite active. Many of the Q&As and "Letters" you see in the Newsletter come from the BMHA Discussion List. Moderating new members seems to have solved our drive-by spamming problem. Nothing but on-topic discussion now. Very nice! Come on and join the fun at: <http://www.yahoo.com/groups/BMHA>.

Scott A. Farrell, KE4WMF

Membership Application

BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA

Date _____

C/O Mike Nickolaus, NF0N

316 E. 32nd St.

South Sioux City, NE 68776-3512

Individual \$10 _____ New member? _____ Renewal? _____

(US or Canada)

Family \$15 _____ Foreign \$15 _____ Donation \$ _____

Make check payable to BMHA, in US dollars or international money order.

Name _____ Call _____

Address _____ License Class _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail address _____ @ _____

Age _____ Most miles bicycled in one day _____

Would you like the BMHA Newsletter in paper copy via snail mail _____

OR via the internet as an e-mail attachment _____ (please check only one)

BMHA's Official Logo

The next time you need to order new QSL cards, don't forget to include the BMHA logo in your design. Here's the official logo, designed by Russ Dwarshuis, KB8U; and restored by Scott A. Farrell, KE4WMF.



BMHA NEWSLETTER

Bicycle Mobile Hams of America
c/o Mike Nickolaus, NF0N
316 E. 32nd St.
South Sioux City, NE 68776-3512

First Class Mail

LETTERS

More From YahooGroups Discussion List...

Hi, my name is Jerry Felts, call is NR5A and I just joined this group. I'm in south Dakota. I need a fun way to get exercise and have always liked bike riding. Last April I had a 4-way bypass operation, and because of diabetes had 2 1/2 toes amputated on my right foot. I can walk for exercise but bike riding would be a lot more fun. I'm active on the HF Pack group and have gone pedestrian mobile a couple of times now.

I've been eyeing bikes in the stores now for a couple of months. Any type or anything I should look for on a bike? I'll be going after a mountain type bike I think. Probably one of the Wallyworld types since its all I can afford. I'm looking at some bikes in a few stores. I couldn't believe how much you can spend on one. Please give me some guide lines on what to get in a cheap bike. hi hi

First off, I'm only interested in HF type of operating. I'm wondering what bands work the best from a bike, probably the higher bands. My rig is a FT-817 and I have both a 4Ah and 7Ah 12 volt battery to power it from. What is the preferred antenna to use? Hamsticks? I've got a lil PW-1 and a 17m Hamstick. I also got a Z-11 tuner, so I've pretty much got the gear. How does mounting something like a Hamstick on the

back of a bike affect its riding? I think trying to work WAS on a bike would be fun. Has it been done? I think maybe I'll try.

Ok last question for this time: How do you guys do your logging while riding? I like to keep a log on everyone I work.

Thanks for you time, guys. This is going to be fun!

Jerry - NR5A - South Dakota

Response Regarding Bicycle Selection...

To me, buying a cheap bike is a lot like buying a used car. The less you pay, the more likely you are going to have problems. I'd say, figure out what you want to do first. Are you going to be riding a lot off road, or is it going to be all on road riding? I've found that cheap mountain bikes fall apart once serious off road riding is done. So, if you are thinking about doing some off road riding, a cheap bike might last long enough for you to figure out if you really want to get "serious."

Don't knock the expensive bikes until you ride one. You might find that the extra cost is worth it! After all, if you had to drive a lot (commute or travel), would you rather have an automatic car with A/C, cruise control, etc; or a really cheap one that maybe saved a few cents on gas?

Shawn Upton, KB1CKT